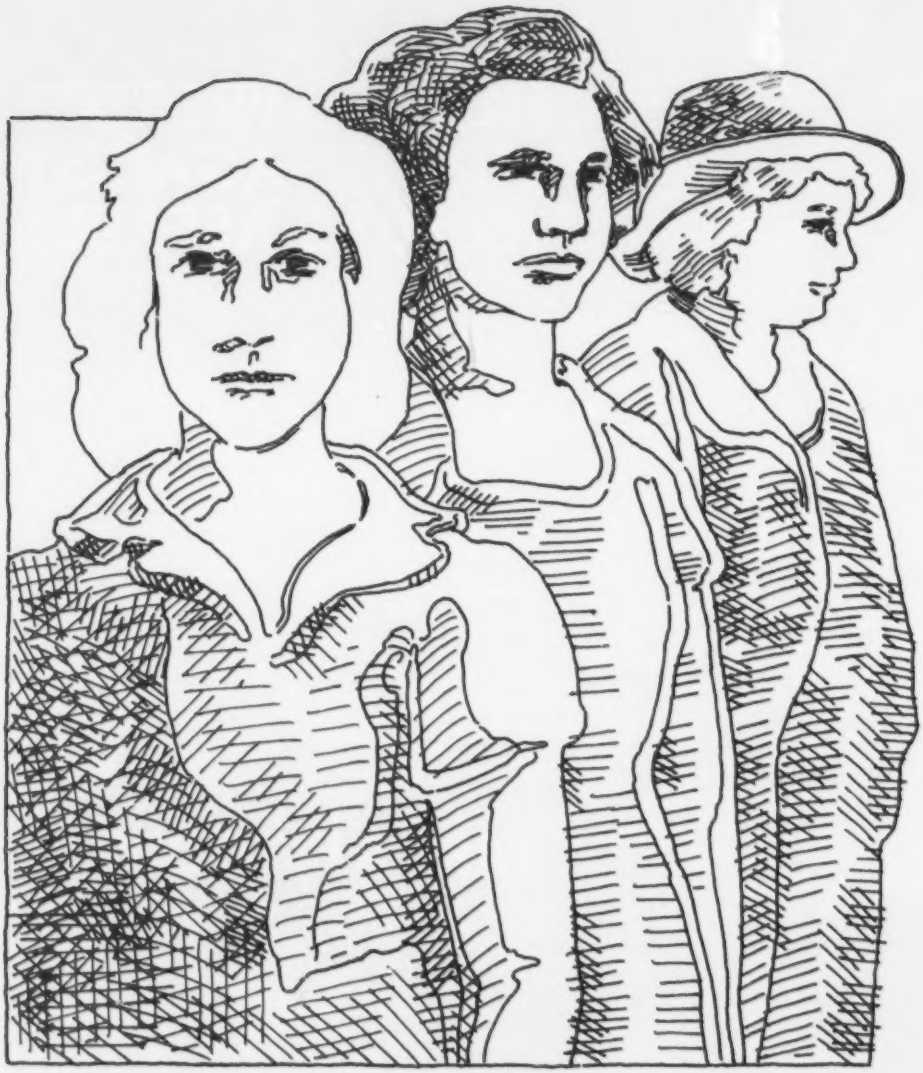
C8d12/sexual

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT

TAKE A BITE OUT OF CRIME

© 1979 The Advertising Council, Inc.

J26.2:



"There are a few things nobody likes to think about. Rape is one of them. Some people are too embarrassed to think about it. Others are too scared. Some folks figure they don't need to think about rape—after all, it could never happen to them.

It probably won't happen to you. But you'll be safer if you realize that it could. Then you can take steps to make yourself a lot safer. This booklet will give you the facts and some tips on prevention."

NEWARK PUBL'C LIBRARY
NOV 1 9 1980
U. S. GOVT. PUBS.
DEPOSITORY 376

TAKE A BITE OUT OF CRIME

©1979 The Advertising Council, Inc.

J 26.2: C 86/12/sexual

The Facts About Rape

Some people have the wrong idea about rape. They think the rapist was overcome with sexual desire. Or the woman was dressed too seductively. Or the victim "asked for it." Or that all women want to be raped.

These ideas assume that rape is a sexual crime—a crime that is motivated by desire. It isn't. It is a violent crime, a hostile attack, an attempt to hurt and humiliate. Sex is only the weapon.

Rape is a crime. Most states define it legally as sexual intercourse, achieved or attempted without the victim's consent and with the use or threat of force. Many states now define all forms of sexual conduct carried out against a person's will as a crime—a sexual assault—whether the person is male or female.

The Victim

If you think that rape is motivated by sex, or happens because the victim asked for it, look at the facts. Rape can happen to anyone—children, grandmothers, students, working women, mothers, wives, the rich and the poor.

The Situation

Perhaps you think that rape happens only in certain high-risk situations—hitchhiking, walking alone at night, going alone to bars. It's true that rapes can happen in these situations. But many rapes take place in ordinary, seemingly safe places. In fact, about one-third of all rapes occur in or near the victim's own home.

When the salesman knocked on the door, I let him in. He was friendly at first. Then, all of a sudden, he grabbed me.

I was downstairs in the laundry room of our apartment building. I'd been there alone many times. But this time . . .

I was walking to work in broad daylight. A car stopped next to me. The driver leaned over and asked for directions. When I got close to the car, he pulled out a gun and told me to get in.

The Rapist

Imagine a typical rapist. Whom do you picture? A sex-crazed man? A psychopath? More often than not, those stereotypes are wrong. Most rapists don't look peculiar or act strangely. But they may be less stable and more aggressive than most people. They may dislike women. Mainly, they want to hurt, humiliate, and degrade another human being.

Rapists are not always strangers to their victims. In over one-third of reported cases, the rapist is an acquaintance, neighbor, friend, or relative.

Reduce Your Risk

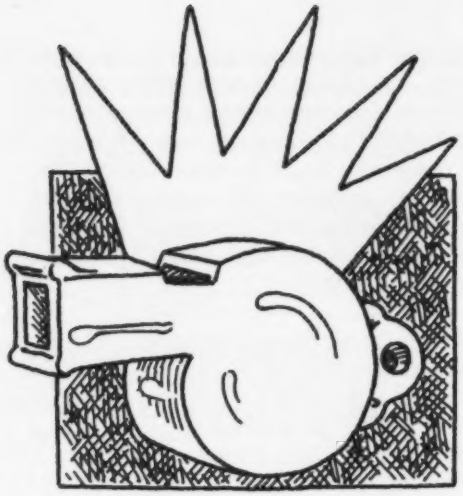
What Should You Do To Prevent Rape?

Facing the facts about rape is the first step. You know that anyone can be the victim. So the next step is to learn how to prevent it from happening to you.

Remember these special preventive measures:

Outside. Most rapes occur outside, on the street, in a park, playground or schoolyard. Be alert to your surroundings and the people around you when you're outside . . . particularly if you're alone or it's dark. Try these tips:

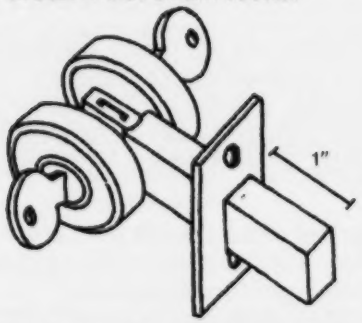
- Stay in well-lighted areas as much as possible.
- Walk confidently, directly, at a steady pace. A rapist looks for someone who appears vulnerable.
- Walk on the side of the street facing traffic.
- Walk close to the curb. Avoid doorways, bushes, and alleys where rapists can hide.
- Wear clothes and shoes that give you freedom of movement. Don't burden yourself with too many packages.



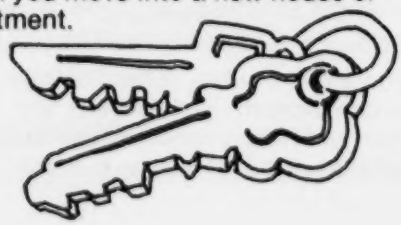
- If you think you are being followed, walk quickly to areas where there are lights and people. If a car appears to be following you, turn and walk in the opposite direction, or walk on the other side of the street.
- Be careful when people stop you for directions. Always reply from a distance, and never get too close to the car.
- If you feel you are in danger, don't be reluctant to scream and run. Consider carrying a whistle or any type of noisemaker. And if you're in trouble, use it!
- If you are in trouble, attract help any way you can. Scream, yell for help, yell "Fire!" or break a window in a house where you think someone is home.

At home. Many rapes occur in the victim's home, in a garage or an apartment laundry room. In some cases, the rapist may be a burglar who breaks into a house and unexpectedly finds someone home. In others, an attacker purposely looks for women home alone. So one of the best ways to prevent sexual assault is to protect your home:

- Make sure all doors are solid and sturdy. Entry doors should be solid core wood (at least 1¾ inches thick) or metal. Good locks – such as a deadbolt lock with a 1-inch throw – are a must. Don't rely on chain locks – an average-size man can easily break most chain locks.

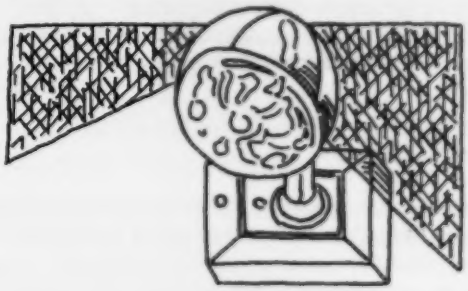


- Have your locks changed or re-keyed when you move into a new house or apartment.

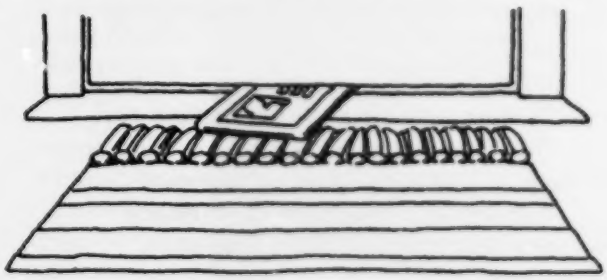


- Install a peephole viewer in your door.

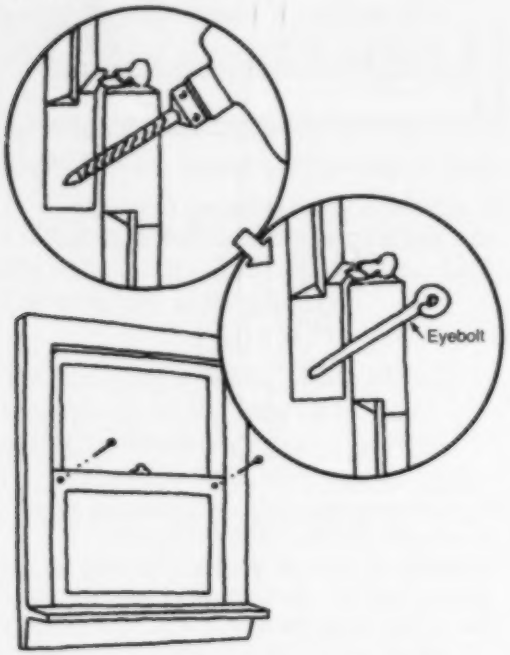
- Install good exterior lighting around your house or apartment building.



- Someone selling something or making repairs? Always check identification before opening your door. Ask that identification cards be slipped under your door for you to check. If you want to be certain, call the person's office. Any reputable sales agent or repairperson will be glad to let you check.



•Make sure all windows can be locked securely. Special key locks are available for windows. Or you can drill holes through the overlapping frames of double hung or sliding glass windows. Then insert a nail or an eyebolt in the holes so windows can't be opened more than several inches.



•Secure sliding glass doors the same way. Bolster the existing lock by placing a solid strip of wood or a broom handle in the track of the closed door. Or install an aluminum "charlie bar" for even greater protection.

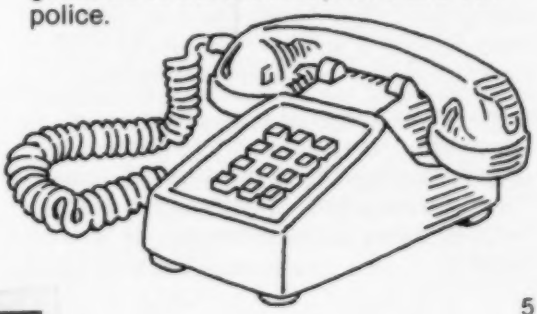
•If you live alone, don't advertise it. Use only your first initials and last name on your mailbox and phone listing.

•If strangers ask to use your phone in an emergency, offer to make the call yourself. Ask them to wait outside while you make the call.

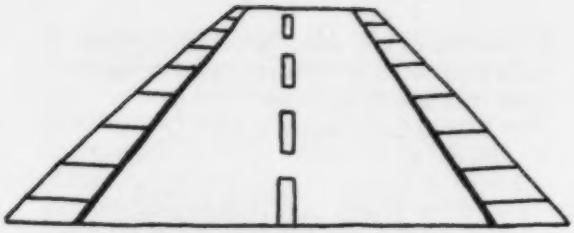
•If strangers telephone or come to your door, don't admit that you are alone.

•If you live in an apartment, avoid being in the laundry room or garage by yourself, especially at night. Tell your landlord if security improvements are needed. Better lighting, stronger locks, night security guards – all are ways to make a building safer.

•If you come home and find a door or window open or signs of forced entry, don't go in. Go to the nearest phone and call police.



READEX FICHE



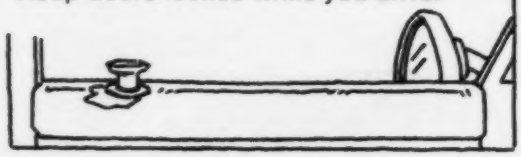
When Driving or Riding. Rapes also happen in cars and other vehicles. Most take place in the rapist's car, so be very careful about accepting rides from strangers. A casual offer of a ride home from somebody you don't know – or know only slightly – could mean trouble.

It's a good idea *never* to hitchhike. If you must hitch a ride, follow these tips:

- Don't hitchhike alone or in deserted places.
- Accept rides only from women or older couples – not from single men or rowdy groups.
- Ask the driver's destination before telling yours. Refuse rides in cars that have door locks controlled by the driver.
- Be aware of the driver's behavior while you're riding. Sit next to the door and keep keys or a lighted cigarette in your hand to use as a weapon if necessary.
- If the driver does not take you to your destination, stay calm. Try to get him to stop for something to drink or eat, then run to the restroom or ask someone for help. You may find an opportunity to escape.

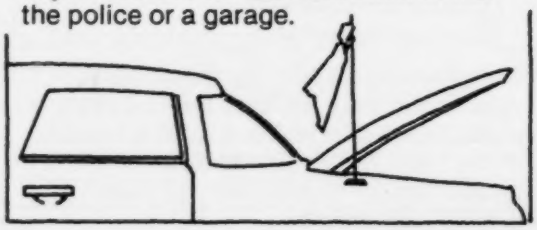
Be especially cautious even when driving your own car. Reduce your risk by taking these precautions:

- *Always* lock your car.
- Check the back seat before you get in.
- Keep doors locked while you drive.



- Park in well-lighted areas.
- If you think you are being followed, drive to a public place or a police station.

- If your car breaks down, open the hood or attach a white cloth to the car antenna. If someone stops to help, stay in your locked car and ask them to call the police or a garage.



Know Your Defenses

What Should You Do if You're Attacked?

"Somebody tries to attack you. What should you do?

There's only one answer . . . it depends.

It depends on you. It depends on the attacker. On the whole situation.

Without knowing the situation, **nobody** can tell you what you can do, or what you **should** do. But here are some things to consider."

Anyone can be a victim of rape. So everyone should think about the kinds of defense she would be willing to use. Now is the time to consider your options—there is little time to think during an attack. Could you really hurt someone who tried to hurt you? Are you willing to scream? Are you able to run?

Remember, rape is a crime of violence, not sex. You've got to assume that the rapist is willing to use violence. If attacked, your main concern—*always*—must be your safety.

There are several ways to react to a sexual assault:

Submitting to the Attack. In every rape, the attacker threatens the victim's safety or life. Sometimes a rapist threatens the victim's children or other family members. If you believe you might get hurt by defending yourself or if you're afraid to fight back, don't. Submitting to a rape out of fear for your safety or your family's, does not mean that you consented. It is still a rape, and still a crime, even if you do not have a single cut or bruise. It should still be reported to the police. Victims who do not resist should never feel guilty: *it is the rapist who committed the crime.*

Passive Resistance. Sometimes a victim may want to resist but is afraid to scream or fight back. In these cases, a more passive type of resistance may help to "defuse" the violence of the attacker. With passive resistance, you can:

- Try to calm the attacker. Talk to him and try to persuade him not to carry out the attack. If you win his confidence, you may be able to escape.

- Claim to be sick or pregnant. Tell him you have V.D. This may intimidate the attacker.
- Try to discourage the rapist. Some women pretend to faint, some cry hysterically, others act insane or mentally incapacitated.
- If you're at home, tell the attacker that a boyfriend is coming over, or that your husband or roommate will be home soon.

Active Resistance. Nobody can tell you whether active resistance – screaming, struggling, fighting back – will be the "right" thing to do. In some cases, it can frighten off or discourage the attacker. But resistance may also lead the rapist to become more violent, or increase his desire to subdue the victim.

There are many kinds of active resistance. Here are some pros and cons regarding the most common ones:

- **Screaming.** A scream can surprise or frighten an attacker away if he fears that people will come to help. But screaming won't help in isolated areas.
- **Struggling and fighting back.** A forceful struggle also may discourage the rapist. If you are not afraid to hurt someone, and can land a strong kick or hit, fighting back may give you the opportunity to escape. All hits or kicks must be forceful and should be aimed at vulnerable areas. A hard kick to the groin, a poke in the eyes, stamping on the attacker's instep, or a hard chop against the front of the throat might disable an attacker.
- **Martial arts.** Special self-defense courses such as judo or karate are very popular in some areas. Many women have taken courses to protect themselves from attack. If you are proficient in these techniques, they can be very effective. But proficiency takes continuous practice.
- **Weapons.** Some women carry weapons such as guns, knives, or spray chemicals to ward off attackers. Unless you are trained – and not afraid – to use these weapons, they can be very dangerous. The attacker might be able to turn them against you. In many states, it is illegal to carry some weapons. So check with law enforcement authorities before you select a weapon.

"In many towns, groups like the YWCA, women's clubs, rape crisis centers, and local high schools have special educational programs on rape defense and protection. Check your local groups to see if they offer such help."

What Happens Next?

What Should You Do If You're a Victim?

Many victims of sexual assault don't know where to turn for help, or what to do. They may be afraid or ashamed to talk to anybody, or they may try to act as though nothing happened.

If you've been assaulted, get help quickly. Call the police. They can take you to the hospital, put you in touch with community services, and get information about the crime from you that will help them arrest the rapist.

If you prefer not to call the police right away, get help from a friend, your doctor, or a hospital emergency room, or contact rape or other crisis services that may be available in your community. Rape crisis programs usually have a hotline number you can call day or night. They can explain your choices, offer counseling, and even contact the police for you. Check the white pages of your telephone directory and jot down the number.

The most important thing to remember after an attack is that you should not touch anything, change your clothes, wash, or douche until you have contacted the police and been to the hospital. If you do, you may accidentally destroy valuable evidence that the police and prosecutor might need to arrest and convict your attacker.

Law Enforcement

Did you know that most rapists are "repeat offenders?" They strike again and again, sometimes assaulting dozens of women every year.

The police need your help to get rapists off the streets. If you report the crime, the police can get valuable information that may help arrest a suspect. Even if you decide not to press charges against the rapist, or if your attack was an attempted rape, the information you give the police could be helpful in other cases.

What happens if you call the police? First, they will make sure you are safe. They'll help you get to the hospital. They may be able to tell you about counseling or other assistance available to you.

Police officers also will question you about what happened. This discussion may take place before or after you visit the hospital. Then the officers will examine the place where the crime occurred and collect evidence.

You'll also talk with a detective soon after the attack. The detective will ask you to describe what happened and may ask very specific questions. In many cities, the detective will be a specialist in sexual assault cases; many such specialists are women.

The detective may ask you to look at photographs of rapists. If a suspect is arrested, you will be asked to identify him in a "line-up." You view the line-up through a one-way mirror so the suspect can't see you.

"Some police departments have special programs for sexual assault victims. In Louisville, for example, the police have established a special sex-offenses unit staffed by male and female officers. When a rape occurs, a "team" of one male and one female detective meets the victim at the hospital. All officers have been specially trained, so they are sensitive to the victim's needs and able to handle the case in the best way possible."

Medical Procedures

It is very important to get medical help as soon as possible after an attack. Usually, the police will take you to the hospital. If you prefer, go there yourself or have a friend take you.

At the hospital, you'll be given a medical examination to make sure that you are all right and to collect medical evidence. This evidence will be used in court if an arrest is made and you press charges. At your request the doctor also can check you for pregnancy and give medication to prevent venereal disease. It's important that you have a follow-up test 4 to 6 weeks after the attack to make sure you don't have V.D. Hospital staff also can refer you for psychological counseling if you feel you need it.

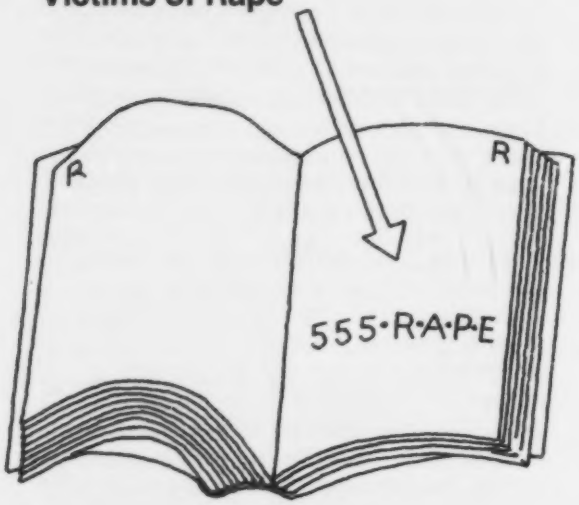
"Lots of hospitals are developing special programs for rape victims. Take St. Luke's in Kansas City, for example. All the staff are specially trained to handle rape cases. They give the victim a private waiting room, and make sure that the exam takes place right away. They also provide a room where victims can talk privately with counselors or police."

Court Procedures

If a suspect is charged with the rape and the case is brought to court, the attorney who prosecutes the accused rapist will probably question you about the assault. After reviewing the facts of the case, the prosecutor has three options:

1. If *the evidence is very good* or *if the suspect does not plead guilty*, the prosecutor may take the case to trial. If so, you may be asked to testify as a witness for the prosecution. The prosecutor will probably talk to you several times before trial to help you prepare. If there are rape counselors available in your community, they can accompany you to the trial if you wish.
2. If there is good evidence, but perhaps *not good enough to convict the accused of rape,* the prosecutor might start a "plea negotiation." In this bargaining process, the prosecutor agrees to charge the rapist with a less serious crime, such as attempted rape or assault, if the rapist agrees to plead guilty. That way the prosecutor makes sure that the suspect is convicted of a crime, even though it is a less serious charge.
3. If there is not enough legal evidence, the prosecutor may decide to drop the case. This does not mean the prosecutor does not believe you—just that *there was not enough legal evidence to satisfy the court requirements.*

Special Services for Victims of Rape



"Many cities and towns have special programs to help rape victims. Like Baton Rouge's Stop Rape Crisis Center. Volunteers there are always on call, ready to answer the hotline, meet victims at the hospital or police station, and generally help victims in every possible way. They also give free counseling, and teach rape prevention."

Rape crisis programs have been organized in many cities to help victims. Most programs use specially-trained volunteers who counsel rape victims, advise them about medical treatment, and help them deal with their family, friends, and co-workers. Three special kinds of services are offered:

- **Hotlines** – Special telephone numbers that allow victims to talk with a rape crisis worker, day or night. Women can call immediately after an attack to get help, or at any other time for counseling or advice. Centers may counsel the victim's family, too.
- **Rape crisis escort service** – Volunteers accompany rape victims to the hospital, to police interviews, or to court. This can be a great support to the victim and encourage her to see the case through.
- **Education and public information** – Public service announcements are broadcast on local television and radio stations to dispel common myths about rape. Listeners are directed to call the rape crisis center for assistance or information. Staff members often hold prevention classes for groups.

What If You Know Someone Who's a Victim of Rape?

Rape is a terrible experience for the victim – and for her friends and family, too. If you know a rape victim, you may notice that she seems to act differently for a while – withdrawn, afraid, or unsure. You yourself may feel hurt, angry, or upset.

What can you do? First, show the person that you care. Give her your support by being available to spend time with her – have dinner, go to a movie, go shopping. Your friend may be afraid to be alone. Let her talk about the crime if she wishes. Many women feel guilty or ashamed after a rape. They may feel that they didn't fight hard enough. They may blame themselves for being in the wrong place at the wrong time. You should let the victim know she did the right thing, just what she had to do to survive.

One final thing. It's important that the victim contact the police and, if the rapist is caught, that she go through with the trial. The support of friends and family members can help her through this difficult time.

The Child Victim

Each year more than 100,000 children suffer some type of sexual abuse. In many cases, the victim is female and the offender is male. Who is the typical offender? In over one-third of the sexual abuse cases involving children, the offender is known to the child and the child's family. In other words, the abuser is often a parent, relative, or close family friend. Because children are so trusting and defenseless, they are especially vulnerable to sexual assault.

How to Respond

Children often make up stories, but they rarely lie about being victims of sexual assault. If a child tells you about being touched or assaulted, take it seriously. Your response helps determine how the child will react to the abuse. Stay calm. Explain that you are concerned about what happened, but not angry with the child. Many children feel guilty, as if they had provoked the assault. Children need to be reassured that they are not to blame, and that they are right to tell you what happened.

Sometimes, a child may be too frightened or confused to talk directly about the abuse. Be alert for any changes in behavior that might hint that the child has suffered a disturbing experience:

- Is the child suddenly more withdrawn than usual, refusing to go to school and afraid to be alone?
- Is the child having trouble sleeping, waking up with nightmares, or wetting the bed?
- Is the child complaining of irritation of the genital areas?
- Are there signs of increased anxiety or immature behavior?

How to Help

In a reassuring, calm tone, find out as much as you can about the incident. A child with physical injuries should be taken immediately to a doctor or an emergency room. Sometimes, the child may need to be treated for V.D. and checked for pregnancy.

Like rapists, most child abusers are repeat offenders. They don't stop with just one incident. So bring the matter to your local law enforcement officers or child protection agency. The court may issue a restraining order so the offender will not be allowed to see the child again. It is important that parents prosecute the offender, because most abusers will not seek help voluntarily. And unless someone takes action the abuser will not receive badly needed treatment.

If your child is abused, or if you are seeking help for someone who has assaulted his or her children, you can contact these groups:

- National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect
  Children's Bureau/Administration for Children, Youth and Families
  U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
  P.O. Box 1182
  Washington, D.C. 20013

  (General information, publications and brochures available on request.)

- Parents Anonymous

  Self-help groups in over 800 locations for parents who are abusive to their children. Weekly group meetings are held free of charge.

  Toll Free Number: 800-421-0353.
  In California: 800-353-0386.

  A local chapter may be listed in the white pages of your telephone directory.

For More Information

If you want more information on rape prevention, the facts about rape, or the kinds of programs that can help the rape victim, you can contact:

- National Center for the Prevention and Control of Rape
  Room 10C03
  Parklawn Building
  5600 Fishers Lane
  Rockville, MD 20857
  (A multi-media packet is available for group presentations. A bibliography of references is also available.)

"Now that you've learned some facts about rape—who the victims are, where it happens, how to prevent it—why not share this information with somebody who doesn't know? Remember, if you reduce your risks and know your defenses, you can help stop this crime from happening."

TAKE A BITE OUT OF CRIME

©1979 The Advertising Council, Inc.

best copy available

Organizations Participating in the Crime Prevention Coalition

The Advertising Council, Inc.
AFL-CIO Department of Community Services
American Association of Retired Persons
Boy Scouts of America
Bureau of Justice Statistics
Federal Bureau of Investigation
General Federation of Women's Clubs
Insurance Information Institute
International Society of Crime Prevention Practitioners
Law Enforcement Assistance Administration
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
National Association of Attorneys General
National Association of Counties
National Association of Criminal Justice Planners
National Association of Social Workers
National Center for Community Crime Prevention
National Conference of Christians and Jews
National Congress of Parents and Teachers
National Council on Crime and Delinquency
National Council of La Raza
National Council of Senior Citizens
National Crime Prevention Institute
National Criminal Justice Association
National District Attorneys Association
National Education Association
National Exchange Club
National Governors Association, Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Protection
National Institute of Justice
National League of Cities
National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives
National Retail Merchants Association
National Retired Teachers' Association
National Rural Crime Prevention Center
National Sheriffs' Association
National Urban League
Office of Justice Assistance, Research, and Statistics
Optimist International
Police Executive Research Forum
Service Corps of Retired Executives
U.S. Conference of Mayors
U.S. Department of the Army
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
U.S. Department of the Treasury, Direct Deposit Program
U.S. Jaycees

This booklet has been prepared by the Office of Justice Assistance, Research, and Statistics for the Crime Prevention Coalition. It is part of an overall public service campaign conducted in the public interest by The Advertising Council, Inc. in cooperation with the National Council on Crime and Delinquency and the Office of Justice Assistance, Research, and Statistics. Consultant support was provided by Carol Holliday Blew, Abt Associates Inc., Cambridge, Massachusetts (J-LEAA-030-76). Special appreciation is acknowledged for the voluntary services contributed to the project by the Dancer Fitzgerald Sample, Inc., advertising agency and by Edward W. Dooley, Vice-President, Citibank, N.A., campaign coordinator.

Office of Justice Assistance, Research, and Statistics
U.S. Department of Justice
Washington, D.C. 20531

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Washington, D.C. 20402

155

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Assistance,
Research, and Statistics

Postage and Fees Paid
U.S. Department of Justice
Jus 436
THIRD CLASS

Washington, D.C. 20531

Official Business
Penalty for Private Use $300